

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 06642 241726Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----117863 241728Z /40
O 240920Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5337

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 6642

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM MURPHY

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PPDC, SY, US
SUBJ: ASSAD LETTER TO CARTER

REF: (A) DAMASCUS 6626, (B) DAMASCUS 6627, (C) DAMASCUS 6628

1. IN BRIEF CONVERSATION AT EVENING RECEPTION OCTOBER 23
PRESIDENT'S POLITICAL ADVISOR DAOUDI ASKED ME MY REACTION
TO ASSAD'S MESSAGE. REPLIED THAT I HAD BEEN
PLEASED BY THE WARMTH OF EXPRESSION FOR WHICH
I ASSUMED HE, DAOUDI, WAS AT LEAST PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE. HE
ACKNOWLEDGED HE HAD BEEN CLOSELY INVOLVED IN DRAFTING LETTER.
I THEN NOTED WE REMAINED FAR APART ON SOME KEY
ISSUES OF BOTH PROCEDURE AND SUBSTANCE. HE AGREED BUT SAID
IMPORTANT FACT WAS THAT WE WERE BOTH SEEKING TO FIND A
COMMON GROUND AND HE FELT ASSAD'S LETTER DEMONSTRATED
THIS. DAOUDI ADDED, QUOTE: WE CONSIDER THAT ISRAEL EXPECTED
SYRIA CATEGORICALLY TO REJECT CARTER'S WHOLE APPROACH AND
THEREBY ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR A BREAKDOWN IN
PREPARATIONS FOR GENEVA. WE HAVE DENIED THEM THAT PLEASURE
AND INTEND TO KEEP PREPARATIONS GOING AHEAD. UNQUOTE.

2. SAID I HAD HAD TROUBLE WITH ONE WORD IN PRESIDENCY'S
SECRET

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TRANSLATION OF THE ARABIC ORIGINAL, QUOTE IQRAAR UNQUOTE.
(DAMASCUS 6626, PARA 1). THE TRANSLATOR HAD RENDERED THIS
AS QUOTE ADOPTION UNQUOTE IN POINT 3 (QUOTE FOLLOWING
THE ADOPTION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WHICH HAVE A SHARED
NATURE, SUBCOMMITTEES WILL BE SET UP TO MAKE GEOGRAPHICAL
ARRANGMENTS (GEOGRAPHICAL SUBCOMMITTEES) FOR THE IMPE-
MENTATION OF THE AGREEMENTS CONCERNING THE SUBSTANTIVE

ISSUES UNQUOTE.) DAOUDI SAID THE PRESIDENT HAD USED
THIS WORD IN THE SENSE IT IS COMMONLY USED AT THE UNITED
NATIONS IN SPEAKING OF QUOTE ADOPTION OF AN AGENDA UNQUOTE.
COMMENT: IT OBVIOUSLY UNWISE TO PIN TOO MUCH ON THE USE OF
A SINGLE WORD. NONETHELESS, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT QUOTE
ADOPTION UNQUOTE CAN BE INTERPRETED AS REACHING AGREEMENT ON
ONLY GENERAL TOPICS, AND THEREFORE CONCEIVABLY LEAVING CONSIDER-
ABLE WORK AND SCOPE FOR INTERPRETATION BY THE GEOGRAPHIC SUB-
COMMITTEES. (ADMITTEDLY, WHEN IT COMES TO THE TERRITORIAL
ISSUE, SYRIA WOULD ARGUE FOR THE GENERAL TOPIC BEING QUOTE
THE TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM LANDS OCCUPIED IN 1967 UNQUOTE, A
FORMULATION PERMITTING NO AMBIGUITY AT LEAST TO THE SYRI-
ISRAELI SUBCOMMITTEE.
MURPHY

SECRET

NNN

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